

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for processing an expense report, comprising:
receiving at an expense report agent one or more transaction identifiers associated with an expense report, a transaction identifier corresponding to a transaction of one or more transactions, the expense report requesting reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

automatically requesting transaction information corresponding to the one or more transaction identifiers from one or more retailer systems, a retailer system used by a retailer that sells a product;

receiving the transaction information from the one or more retailer systems, the transaction information provided in a machine-readable format;

inserting the transaction information into the expense report to request the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

evaluating the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising performing at least one of the following in response to the evaluation:

initiating the reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

denying the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

returning the expense report to a user system associated with the expense report.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein evaluating the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement further comprises:

accessing an expense policy governing the expense report; and

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense policy.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein evaluating the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement further comprises:

determining that an expense authorization request is approved; and

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense authorization request.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein evaluating the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement further comprises:

identifying a non-conforming line item of a plurality of line items of the expense report;

retrieving a chain of command corresponding to the non-conforming line item, the chain of command comprising a sequence of authorities; and

performing the following for at least one authority of the sequence of authorities until the non-conforming line item is resolved;

selecting an authority of the sequence of authorities as a current authority;

sending the expense report to an authority expense report agent corresponding to the current authority;

determining if the non-conforming line item has been resolved; and

selecting a next authority of the sequence of authorities as the current authority if the non-conforming line item has not been resolved.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, further comprising resolving the non-conforming line item by performing at least one of the following:

determining that the non-conforming line item has been approved by an authority that can approve the non-conforming line item;

determining that the non-conforming line item has been corrected by an authority that can correct the non-conforming line item; and

determining that the non-conforming line item has been rejected.

7. (Currently Amended) A expense report agent for processing an expense report, comprising:

an interface operable to receive one or more transaction identifiers associated with an expense report, a transaction identifier corresponding to a transaction of one or more transactions, the expense report requesting reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

a processing engine coupled to the interface and operable to:

automatically request transaction information corresponding to the one or more transaction identifiers from one or more retailer systems, a retailer system used by a retailer that sells a product;

receive the transaction information from the one or more retailer systems, the transaction information provided in a machine-readable format;

insert the transaction information into the expense report to request the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

evaluate the expense report to determine the reimbursement.

8. (Original) The expense report agent of Claim 7, the processing engine further operable to perform at least one of the following in response to the evaluation:

initiate the reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

deny the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

return the expense report to a user system associated with the expense report.

9. (Original) The expense report agent of Claim 7, the processing engine further operable to evaluate the expense report to determine the reimbursement by:

accessing an expense policy governing the expense report; and

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense policy.

10. (Original) The expense report agent of Claim 7, the processing engine further operable to evaluating the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement by:

determining that an expense authorization request is approved; and

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense authorization request.

11. (Original) The expense report agent of Claim 7, the processing engine further operable to evaluate the expense report to determine the reimbursement by:

identifying a non-conforming line item of a plurality of line items of the expense report;

retrieving a chain of command corresponding to the non-conforming line item, the chain of command comprising a sequence of authorities; and

performing the following for at least one authority of the sequence of authorities until the non-conforming line item is resolved;

selecting an authority of the sequence of authorities as a current authority;

sending the expense report to an authority expense report agent corresponding to the current authority;

determining if the non-conforming line item has been resolved; and

selecting a next authority of the sequence of authorities as the current authority if the non-conforming line item has not been resolved.

12. (Original) The expense report agent of Claim 11, the processing engine further operable to resolve the non-conforming line item by performing at least one of the following:

determining that the non-conforming line item has been approved by an authority that can approve the non-conforming line item;

determining that the non-conforming line item has been corrected by an authority that can correct the non-conforming line item; and

determining that the non-conforming line item has been rejected.

13. (Currently Amended) Logic for processing an expense report, the logic embodied in a medium and operable to:

receive at an expense report agent one or more transaction identifiers associated with an expense report, a transaction identifier corresponding to a transaction of one or more transactions, the expense report requesting reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

automatically request transaction information corresponding to the one or more transaction identifiers from one or more retailer systems, a retailer system used by a retailer that sells a product;

receive the transaction information from the one or more retailer systems, the transaction information provided in a machine-readable format;

insert the transaction information into the expense report to request the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

evaluate the expense report to determine the reimbursement.

14. (Original) The logic of Claim 13, further operable to perform at least one of the following in response to the evaluation:

initiate the reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

deny the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

return the expense report to a user system associated with the expense report.

15. (Original) The logic of Claim 13, further operable to evaluate the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement by:

accessing an expense policy governing the expense report; and

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense policy.

16. (Original) The logic of Claim 13, further operable to evaluate the expense report to determine the reimbursement by:

determining that an expense authorization request is approved; and

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense authorization request.

17. (Original) The logic of Claim 13, further operable to evaluate the expense report to determine the reimbursement by:

- identifying a non-conforming line item of a plurality of line items of the expense report;

- retrieving a chain of command corresponding to the non-conforming line item, the chain of command comprising a sequence of authorities; and

- performing the following for at least one authority of the sequence of authorities until the non-conforming line item is resolved;

 - selecting an authority of the sequence of authorities as a current authority;

 - sending the expense report to an authority expense report agent corresponding to the current authority;

 - determining if the non-conforming line item has been resolved; and

 - selecting a next authority of the sequence of authorities as the current authority if the non-conforming line item has not been resolved.

18. (Original) The logic of Claim 17, further operable to resolve the non-conforming line item by performing at least one of the following:

- determining that the non-conforming line item has been approved by an authority that can approve the non-conforming line item;

- determining that the non-conforming line item has been corrected by an authority that can correct the non-conforming line item; and

 - determining that the non-conforming line item has been rejected.

19. (Currently Amended) A system for processing an expense report, comprising:
means for receiving at an expense report agent one or more transaction identifiers associated with an expense report, a transaction identifier corresponding to a transaction of one or more transactions, the expense report requesting reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

means for automatically requesting transaction information corresponding to the one or more transaction identifiers from one or more retailer systems, a retailer system used by a retailer that sells a product;

means for receiving the transaction information from the one or more retailer systems, the transaction information provided in a machine-readable format;

means for inserting the transaction information into the expense report to request the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

means for evaluating the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for processing an expense report, comprising:
receiving at an expense report agent one or more transaction identifiers associated with an expense report, a transaction identifier corresponding to a transaction of one or more transactions, the expense report requesting reimbursement for the one or more transactions;
automatically requesting transaction information corresponding to the one or more transaction identifiers from one or more retailer systems, a retailer system used by a retailer that sells a product;

receiving the transaction information from the one or more retailer systems, the transaction information provided in a machine-readable format;

inserting the transaction information into the expense report to request the reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

evaluating the expense report at the expense report agent to determine the reimbursement, the expense report evaluated by:

accessing an expense policy governing the expense report;

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense policy;

determining that an expense authorization request is approved; and

evaluating the expense report in accordance with the expense authorization request;

the expense report further evaluated by:

identifying a non-conforming line item of a plurality of line items of the expense report;

retrieving a chain of command corresponding to the non-conforming line item, the chain of command comprising a sequence of authorities; and

performing the following for at least one authority of the sequence of authorities until the non-conforming line item is resolved;

selecting an authority of the sequence of authorities as a current authority;

sending the expense report to an authority expense report agent corresponding to the current authority; and

determining if the non-conforming line item has been resolved, the non-conforming line item resolved by performing at least one of the following:

determining that the non-conforming line item has been approved by an authority that can approve the non-conforming line item;

determining that the non-conforming line item has been corrected by an authority that can correct the non-conforming line item; and

determining that the non-conforming line item has been rejected; and

selecting a next authority of the sequence of authorities as the current authority if the non-conforming line item has not been resolved; and

performing at least one of the following in response to the evaluation:

initiating the reimbursement for the one or more transactions;

denying the reimbursement for the one or more transactions; and

returning the expense report to a user system associated with the expense report.